United Nations ST/IC/2002/40

Secretariat

27 June 2002

Information circular*

To: Members of the staff

From: The Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management

Subject: **2002 competitive examinations for Arabic-language translators/précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters**

1. The purpose of the present information circular is to invite applications from staff members of the Secretariat at the P-3 level and below who wish to take one or more of the following competitive examinations in 2002, in accordance with the provisions of ST/AI/1998/7 of 23 March 1998:

(a) Competitive examination for Arabic-language translators/précis-writers;

(b) Competitive examination for Arabic-language editors;

(c) Competitive examination for Arabic-language verbatim reporters.

2. The competitive examinations for Arabic-language translators/précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters will be held, tentatively, on **7, 8 and 9 October 2002**, respectively, in New York, Geneva, Vienna, in a number of Arab countries and other locations according to the number and location of qualified candidates convoked for the examination. The purpose of these examinations is to establish rosters from which present and future vacancies for Arabic-language translators/précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters will be filled.

3. The examinations are open to staff members of the United Nations at the P-3 level and below who meet the eligibility requirements, as well as qualified external candidates. Staff members of subsidiary organs of the United Nations and staff members whose service is limited to a particular organ, fund or programme of the United Nations or to special missions are considered external candidates for the purpose of these examinations. Such candidates, if successful in one or more of the examinations, will be offered a new appointment with the United Nations subject to normal United Nations recruitment procedures and standards. Staff members who are successful and are selected for inclusion in one or more of the rosters will be assigned to fill vacancies for Arabic-language posts as they occur in the language services in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and Bangkok. Assignments are

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subject to rotation and successful candidates may thereafter be called upon to serve at other duty stations in Africa, Asia or Europe or at Headquarters according to the needs of the Organization. Successful candidates are expected to serve **a minimum of five years** in language posts. The assignment of staff members of the United Nations who are successful in the examination(s) and are selected to fill vacancies will be subject to the conditions set out in paragraphs 12 to 16 below.

4. Staff members of the Secretariat applying for the examination(s) must:

(a) Have Arabic as their main language;[1]

(b) Have a perfect command of Arabic and an excellent knowledge of English and one of the other official languages of the United Nations (Chinese, French, Russian or Spanish). The Board of Examiners, appointed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, requires that candidates' claims to knowledge of official languages be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files. Staff members who have been enrolled in a United Nations language course in any of the languages claimed must have passed the United Nations language proficiency examination in that language. Candidates who have not attended the United Nations language courses in the languages claimed must substantiate their claims to knowledge of those languages. For this purpose, staff members should attach to their application either a photocopy of a diploma or a certificate from a language school or a brief explanation of how they acquired their knowledge of the languages claimed. Staff members are advised to submit photocopies, not originals, of such documentation;

(c) Hold a degree or an equivalent qualification from a university or institution of equivalent status or hold a university degree from a recognized school of translation.

In addition, candidates are expected to have computer and word-processing skills.

5. The requirement of a degree or its equivalent from a university or institution of equivalent status mentioned in paragraph 4 (c) may be waived for staff members who, in the judgement of the Board of Examiners, have adequate post-secondary educational qualifications from a university or institution of equivalent status and adequate secondary educational qualifications from an establishment at which the principal language of instruction is Arabic, in addition to five years of continuous service with the United Nations Secretariat by 31 December 1989.

6. All applications will be reviewed by the Board of Examiners. All applicants will be notified of the Board's decision in respect of their application. **The Board's decisions are final**.

7. **The written translation and précis-writing examination, to be held, tentatively, on 7 October 2002**, will consist of four papers:

(a) Translation into Arabic of a general text in English (two hours). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

[1] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

(b) Translation into Arabic of one text chosen by the candidate from a total of four texts, one in each of the official United Nations languages other than English (one hour and a half);

(c) Summary in Arabic of a text in English (one hour and a half);

(d) Translation into Arabic of one specialized text in English (economic, social, legal or scientific/technical) (one hour and a half).

8. **The written editing examination, to be held, tentatively, on 8 October 2002**, will consist of four papers:

(a) Editing of a general text in Arabic (two hours). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

(b) Editing of a text in Arabic to bring it into line with a text edited in English (one hour and a half);

(c) Translation into Arabic of one text chosen by the candidate from a total of four texts, one in each of the official United Nations languages other than English (one hour and a half);

(d) Summary of an Arabic text (one hour and a half).

9. **The written verbatim reporting examination, to be held, tentatively, on 9 October 2002**, will consist of four mandatory papers and one optional paper:

Mandatory papers:

(a) Translation of a text from English into Arabic (one hour and a half). It should be noted that this paper is eliminatory. Only candidates who are successful in this paper will have their other papers marked;

(b) Editing of an Arabic text to ensure linguistic integrity, clarity and consistency of meaning (one hour);

(c) Editing of a text in Arabic to bring it into line with the original English (one hour and a half);

(d) Translation into Arabic of a text in an official language of the United Nations other than English (one hour);

Optional paper:

(e) Editing of a text in English to bring it into line with an Arabic text (one hour and a half).

10. The use of a dictionary or any other reference material will **not** be permitted during the examination. Similarly, candidates may not use personal computers to prepare their papers.

11. On the basis of the results of each written examination, the Board of Examiners will invite selected candidates to an interview. The Board will interview each candidate to assess general knowledge, professional experience, knowledge of the United Nations and current events, adaptability to the prevailing working conditions of the United Nations Secretariat, readiness to serve at any duty station and ability to work as a member of a team. In the case of translators/précis-writers, candidates will be given some preparation time and be asked to translate orally a

text from English into Arabic. The interview is an integral part of the examination. Therefore, candidates who are invited for an interview **should not** assume that they will automatically be offered an assignment.

12. On the basis of the overall results of each examination, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management the names of candidates who qualify for inclusion in the relevant roster. All candidates admitted to the examination will be informed in writing of the Board's final recommendation in respect of their candidature. The Board's recommendations are **not** subject to appeal. The Board **does not** release individual scores or results. When vacancies occur, successful candidates will be recruited from the rosters in overall ranking order, subject to the requirements of the services in terms of expertise and language combinations. Candidates appointed to a function who have been successful in more than one examination will be eligible to transfer at a later date to a different function for which they have also passed the examination.

13. Staff members selected to fill vacancies will be assigned as Arabic-language translators/précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters for a trial period of two years. Staff members below the P-2 level or who are in the General Service category will receive a special post allowance to the P-2 level. Staff members at the P-2 and P-3 levels will be assigned at their respective levels. Successful candidates are expected to be able to use a computer workstation.

14. Successful candidates assigned directly to duty stations away from Headquarters will normally be required to spend the first six months of their trial period in the corresponding service at Headquarters.

15. Staff members with a special post allowance to the P-2 level and those already at the P-2 level who complete the trial period successfully and are recommended by the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services and the Office of Human Resources Management may be promoted to the P-3 level. Staff members already at the P-3 level who complete the trial period successfully will be confirmed in their functions at the P-3 level. Staff members on fixed-term appointment will be eligible to be considered for permanent appointment subject to the requirements of the staff rules in force. Staff members who do not complete the trial period successfully will be reassigned to posts at their previous levels and the special post allowance, if any, will be discontinued.

16. In accordance with the needs of the service/section, successful candidates may be called upon to work outside normal working hours, including weekends and holidays.

17. Staff members applying for the examination(s) should complete the attached form and submit it, not later than **12 August 2002**, to:

2002 Competitive Examinations for Arabic-language Translators/Précis-Writers, Editors and Verbatim Reporters

Examinations and Tests Section
Specialist Services Division
Office for Human Resources Management
Room S-2575-E
United Nations Secretariat
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax No.: (1-212) 963-3683
E-mail: OHRM_exam@un.org

Applications received after the above deadline will not be considered.

18. In order to ensure receipt of all applications submitted by staff members from offices away from Headquarters, these staff members are requested to return their applications to the Specialist Services Division of the Office of Human Resources Management through the chief administrative officer or director of the United Nations information centre of their respective duty stations by **12 August 2002**, the deadline for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division.

Application[a]

2002 competitive examinations for Arabic-language translators/ précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters

Index No.[b] ☐☐☐☐☐☐

Last name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Category ☐☐ Level ☐☐

First name ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ Male ☐ Female ☐

Date of entry on duty Month ☐☐ Year ☐☐☐☐

Type of contract _____ Expiration date _____

Department/office[c] _____ Duty station _____

Room No. _____ Tel. extension _____ Fax extension _____ E-mail _____

Have you taken this examination before? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

Have you taken another United Nations competitive examination? Yes ☐ Year ☐☐☐☐ No ☐

If yes, which examination(s) _____

What is your main language?[d] ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

A. Knowledge of other languages[e]

Language(s)	*United Nations language programme (indicate highest level and date)*	*Courses taken at other institutions (name and location)*

B. Indicate your ability in each of the languages mentioned above

Language	*Read*		*Understand*		*Speak*		*Write*	
	Easily	*Not easily*	*Easily*	*Not easily*	*Fluently*	*Not fluently*	*Easily*	*Not easily*

C. University degree or equivalent or post-secondary educational qualifications

Name of institution[f] (include place and country)	*Language of instruction*	*Attended (month/year)*		*Degree or equivalent[f]*	*Main field of study*
		From	*To*		

D. Secondary school qualifications

Name of institution[f] (include place and country)	*Language of instruction*	*Attended (month/year)*		*Certificate or equivalent[f]*	*Main field of study*
		From	*To*		

E. Describe work experience (giving dates and length of time) in translation/précis-writing, editing, verbatim reporting or related fields, if any.

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F. Please indicate the examination(s) for which you are applying. Your application will not be considered if this part of the application is not completed.

☐ (a) The competitive examination for Arabic-language translators/ précis-writers;

☐ (b) The competitive examination for Arabic-language editors;

☐ (c) The competitive examination for Arabic-language verbatim reporters.

☐ The optional paper in the Arabic-language verbatim reporter examination (this is only an option if you have checked the previous box).

I certify that the information I have provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date _____ Signature _____

I have read information circular ST/IC/2002/40 and I understand that, if I am successful in the 2002 competitive examinations for Arabic-language translators/précis-writers, editors and verbatim reporters, and recommended for inclusion in the roster(s), my assignment as an Arabic-language translator/précis-writer, editor or verbatim reporter will be subject to my acceptance of the conditions of service indicated in paragraphs 12 to 16 of that circular.

Date _____ Signature _____

Notes

[a] Staff members applying for these examinations **must complete this application form**. In addition, staff members **must attach** written proof of claimed secondary educational qualifications. Written proof of claimed post-secondary education must also be attached unless the staff member was convoked for the G-to-P examination for promotion to the Professional category or for another language examination. Applications that are incomplete or do not include essential information or documentation will be returned to the staff member for completion and resubmission **by the deadline for receipt of applications** in the Specialist Services Division. In this connection, staff members are informed that extensions for receipt of applications in the Specialist Services Division will **not** be granted. Therefore, staff members are advised to submit their applications on time.

[b] Normally appears on your grounds pass, monthly salary statement and personnel action (P.5) forms. If not, please contact your Human Resources Officer to obtain your number.

[c] Staff members should indicate the department or office to which they are currently assigned, e.g., DGAACS, ECE, UNCTAD, UNOG, UNOV or other (please specify).

[d] "Main language" should be understood to be the language in which the candidate is best able to work. Candidates' claims to Arabic as their main language must be supported by relevant documentation in their official status files.

[e] Candidates are reminded that they must submit relevant documentation to substantiate their claims as appropriate in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 4 (b) above.

[f] Give exact name and title in original language. Do not translate or equate.